creation of Joint Operation Centres and multi agency coordination mechanism. The coastal surveillance and patrolling has been enhanced. Joint and operational exercises are taking place on regular basis between Navy. Coast Guard. Coastal Police and Customs in order to check the effectiveness of the new systems. The increase of manpower, assets and other infrastructure required for strengthening the coastal security and meeting the security threats is an ongoing process.

Firms blacklisted in consultation with CVC

1410. SHRI DHARAMPAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has blacklisted some firms after consultations with the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC);

(b) if so, the details thereof and names of such firms;

(c) whether Government is aware that in number of tenders floated by Government, there exist middle-man; and

(d) if so, the steps Government has taken to make it mandatory to deal directly with vendors through competitive international biddings?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) The following decisions have been taken after consultations with the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) in respect of seven firms/companies/suppliers/vendors, supplying defence equipment to the armed forces during the last 2 years and the current year *i.e.* M/s Israeli Military Industries, Israel; M/s Singapore Technology, Singapore; M/s HYT Engg; M/s T.S. Kishan and Co. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi; M/s R.K. Machine Tools; M/s BBT, Poland; M/s Media Architects Pte, Ltd., Singapore:-

(i) Where contracts have been concluded and also executed, action should be taken against the companies, as per the provisions of the contract, on completion of the CBI investigation.

(ii) In regard to the tender cases of procurement/execution, where the tender process has already been started and where the companies mentioned in the FIR are figuring, each case should be dealt as per the tender conditions, keeping in view the FIR in question. No tender should be awarded to the companies mentioned in the FIR unless the CBI investigation clears them totally.

(iii) The tender cases of procurement/execution, where the tender process has not yet started, there should be no dealing with the companies mentioned in the FIR, till the finalization of investigation.

(iv) Contracts that have been entered into and are being executed or pending execution, shall remain on hold. In these cases, further action will be taken as per the contractual provisions on receipt of the investigation report of the CBI.

(c) and (d) Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP) 2008 provides for direct dealing with Original Equipment Manufacturers(OEMs) or Authorised Vendors or Government sponsored Export Agencies (applicable in case of countries where domestic laws do not permit direct export by OEMs). Further, the procedure, *inter-alia*, incorporate provisions for penalties being imposed if any seller engages any individual or firm, whether Indian or foreign whatsoever, to intercede, facilitate or in any way recommend to the Government of India or any of its functionaries, whether officially or unofficially, to the award of the Contract to the Seller.

Replacement of ageing cheetah helicopters

1411. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is still in the process of replacing almost 190 ageing Cheetah helicopters, many of which are at the fag end of their life-span;

(b) whether validation trials relating to on-going procurement bids have been conducted;

(c) whether the post-validation trials, the procurement manual stipulates a round of winter trials before a final decision is taken have been conducted; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) The request for proposal (RFP) for replacing the Cheetah helicopters has been issued. Further action as per the existing procedures including the Defence Procurement Procedure 2008 is underway.

Detention of Korean merchant ship by Indian Navy

†1412. SHRI Y. P. TRIVEDI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Navy had detained Korean Merchant Ship going to Karachi from Colombo in Kerala in October, 2009;

(b) whether the ship had entered Indian territorial waters without permission; and

(c) whether search has been undertaken in the ship and the details of the items recovered therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) A North Korean ship, MV Hyang Ro Bong proceeding from Colombo to Bin Qasim, Pakistan was located anchored in the Indian territorial waters on 2nd Oct 2009 to carry out emergency repairs. A Joint investigation team of officers of Indian Coast Guard, Indian Navy, Customs and State Police investigated the reasons for its anchoring without information to Indian authorities. No suspicious activities or items were observed onboard and the ship was allowed to continue its passage.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.